

2015-07-14 Wordpress.com Dashboard continued.

To get to your Wordpress.com dashboard, enter your Wordpress.com blog address followed by a regular slash the wp-admin.

Just to review, the back end or the Dashboard of the Wordpress site is the place where you will manage all of the posts, pages, media, comments, themes, widgets, plugins and more. Some of these features we have already covered and many will be covered in future blogging trainings which we do here at Mentoring for Free.

When you first log into your Wordpress Dashboard you will see a lot of different options to help you create and manage content within the site. You will also see the “Welcome to Wordpress” message at the top of the page, and there are some great links here to help you learn. If you scroll down the page, you will see the primary features of the Wordpress Dashboard with (1) At a Glance, (2) Quick Draft, (3) Activity, (4) Stats, (5) What’s Hot and finally (6) Your Stuff. You can also drag and drop all of these primary features into new locations. You can also minimize these features so you can customize the way the dashboard looks and feels.

There is a toolbar off to the left hand side of the dashboard that breaks apart all the features of the Wordpress site. The “Dashboard” word at the top of the toolbar will always take you back to the main Dashboard view and also offers any updates available for Wordpress. Content management features like “Posts”, “Media”, “Pages” and “Comments” help you to create content to publish or utilize within the site. And Application

management features like “Appearance”, “Plugins”, “Users’, “Tools” and “Settings” help you to manage how the site looks and functions in addition to who can access the site.

When you select one of these options in the tool bar, you will get a new main contextual area for the content available for that feature. For instance, when we select “Posts”, information about our Posts appear in the main part of the Dashboard.

When individual features are open you have the ability to toggle options for those features. For example, using the “Screen Options” drop down, we can deselect “Comments” if we don’t want our comments to appear in our main contextual area. Click on the “Screen Options” tab again to minimize this area.

You will also notice a second “Help” tab that you can click on to get links to documentation and support forums for each individual feature. Click on the “Help” tab again to minimize this window. And if you want to return to your Dashboard, click on the “Dashboard” option within your toolbar.

Once you create and publish your changes within the Dashboard, those changes will appear on the front end of your site which is accessible by clicking on the site title or the “Visit Site” link at the top of the Dashboard. When you are logged into the site and on the front end, you will see a similar link at the top of this page which allows you to link back to the dashboard in order to continue editing and developing the site.

At this point in the training, I would like to answer any questions you may have up until now as we will next be doing a review of Wordpress themes.

Wordpress themes control the visual look and layout of the site by tying together elements like menus, posts, pages, widgets and images. There are many themes available that can help you create the look and feel that you are after and each theme is inherently different, and will provide different customization options.

By returning to the Wordpress Dashboard, you can manage and customize themes by going to “Appearance” in the side menu and selecting the “Themes” option. You will see that there are already several themes installed in the site. As of today, there are 368 themes to choose from with some being free and others having a one-time price tag.

By hovering the mouse over the theme we can click on “Theme Details” to get information about an individual theme, or we can click on the live preview button to see what our content will look like using that theme. Even though we haven’t created our own content yet, we can see what our default sample data looks like in any of the themes. Keep in mind that this is only a preview. Click on “Save & Activate” to activate the theme for the site, or close the preview and return to Themes area where you can then click on the “Activate” button to make this the active theme for your site.

Once the theme has been activated, return to the front end of the site and refresh the page. You will notice a different look and feel for the front end. The color scheme has changed a little bit, menus have changed, and your widgets have moved into a different position. After you have tried a number of new themes, you can return to your original theme unless you find one that suits your tastes better.

You can browse through the Trending, Popular and Newest themes of Wordpress. There are many themes available and I really do recommend that you spend some time to find the look and feel that is right for you, for your content and especially for your website visitors. If one of these themes is appealing to you, and you would like to install it in your site, go to the theme and click on the “Activate” button which will install the theme into your site, and once it is installed we will return to our themes area.

Another option for finding themes for Wordpress is by going to <http://theme.wordpress.com>. The Wordpress Themes Directory will offer many options for finding free or commercial Wordpress themes. To customize the theme you are currently using, return to the Dashboard and click on the “Customize” button for the active theme. A live preview will open up and there are many options off to the left hand side to customize each theme, but each theme is inherently different and will provide different options here. For instance, you can create a site title and tagline. By erasing the default site title that comes with the site, you can enter any site title you wish for your site. A new tagline for the site can also be created and notice while you type, these changes are reflected in the live preview area. You also have the option to stop displaying the site title and tagline altogether by clicking on the “Display Site Title and Tagline” checkbox.

There are also a few options for adjusting colors. The first option is the site title color and this will change only the Site Title text which we had just added to the site. The next option is the background color and by changing the color you will also see a little bit of the preview off to the right side has changed to the color you have chosen. If we click on the “Save & Publish” button,

we can actually see these changes on the front end of the site. After saving, you can return to the front end of the site and refresh the page and we will see all they customizing changes we have done integrated live on the front end.

To really start customizing your theme, we can return to the Dashboard so we can upload some imagery. The first option is to select a header image, and there are recommended dimension sizes here. You can use the Microsoft Paint program under Accessories which is a free part of the Windows operating system to size and crop your image. This Microsoft Paint training was done by me in one of our Thursday advertising calls a while back. Please note that this dimension size will change depending on the theme you are using. To upload your image, just click on the “Add New Image” button where we will be directed to an abbreviated view of the Media Manager where we can see those suggested image dimensions again, and we will click on the “Select Files” button so that you can browse your computer for an image you have created or downloaded.

When we upload this image to our Wordpress site, it is automatically added to my Media Library, and it is not only used for the header image here but we can use it throughout our Wordpress site as we see fit. We also have the ability to create Attachment details which are useful for the end user if they cannot see the image on the front end for whatever reason. When you click on the “Select & Crop” button, you can use the drag and drop feature to crop the image header that has been created.

Wordpress is not an image editing software, but there are a few tools like this available. You will now click on the “Crop Image” button and finish up, and we will exit the Media Library and we will

come back to our live preview area where we can see our new header image.

Another option for customizing the theme is using imagery is to add a background image. By default, there is no background image in many site themes. To upload an image, click on the “No Image” button and then click on select a file. Just like before, you will be able to browse your computer to upload a background image or you can easily create one for your site. With all the work we have done on our Wednesday “Mental Cleanse” calls, our minds should now be very creative in order to do this. If you upload an image which is high resolution, it will take a second or two to load into the site, and you should beware if you are going to use a high resolution image as a background image because it could slow down your page load time. You will have to test this yourself and also you may want to get some opinions of some people you know here at Mentoring for Free. Once you have successfully uploaded that background image, you should click on the “Save & Publish” button and you will return to the front end of the Wordpress site and refresh the page where you will be able to see the header image and the background image that you have just added.

Your theme will also help you to manage other Wordpress features like menus and widget-ready areas, which can change depending on the theme you are using. Most menus appear below the header image on the front end, and often times the widget-ready areas are off to the left hand side of the page. By returning to the Dashboard, we can see there are sometimes other options to your chosen theme including “Widgets” and sometimes a “Static Front Page” which will always keep the feel

of your site constant. We will cover some of the theme features in later training sessions as we get deeper in creating our website. In our next Wordpress blogging training session next month, we will start organizing your content by creating categories and show you the difference of just posting blogs and creating your website. What I have found is that Wordpress has all the tools for you to create a beautiful Website without knowing how to do any computer programming. It is just perfect for a Network Marketer because we must focus mainly on building our businesses by building ourselves. We will now open up the training session for comments and questions you may have up until now. We have covered a lot of information up to here but this stuff becomes very easy as you dive right into it. Please do not let all this information get you overwhelmed as it is really not that complicated and Wordpress has many forums where you can ask questions if you get stuck.